THR.COM/AFM

The Hollywood Reporter

AFM DAILY №4 NOVEMBER 8, 2014

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天将雄师

DRAGON BLADE

A DANIEL LEE FILM

WHEN THE EAGLE MEETS THE DRAGON

READY FOR DELIVERY IN FEBRUARY 2015

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Yellowbird 3D

...Is Ready For Take Off

Directed by Christian De Vita

SCREENING TOMORROW

YELLOWBIRD (3D): MARKET PREMIERE

Sun 9th Nov 3pm AMC Santa Monica 4

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The Hollywood Reporter

NOVEMBER 8, 2014
THR.COM/AFM | AFM | №4

SANTA MONICA WEATHER AND HIGH TEMPS

TODAY 82° F 28° C | TOMORROW 75° F 24° C

BUYERS GO TO THE MAT FOR *YOGA*

By Pamela McClintock

The American Film Market has one message for **Kevin Smith** and **Johnny Depp**: Namaste.

Smith's upcoming horror movie *Yoga Hosers* — starring Depp opposite his daughter, **Lily-Rose Depp**, and Smith's daughter, **Harley Quinn Smith** — has presold in multiple foreign markets after XYZ Films introduced the project this week at AFM.

That includes to Parco in Japan, Big Movie in Russia, Falcon Films in the Middle East, Queen in Indonesia, MandarinVision in Taiwan and Pan Asia Pay Television to Fox International Channel.

On the eve of AFM, the team behind *Yoga Hosers* released the first promotional still from the spinoff of *Tusk* — written and directed by Smith and with a cameo by

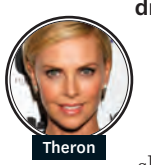
CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

A24, DirecTV Nab *Dark Places*

By Rebecca Ford, Pamela McClintock

A24, in partnership with DirecTV, has picked up U.S. distribution rights for *Dark Places*, the adaptation of Gillian Flynn's 2009 mystery novel.

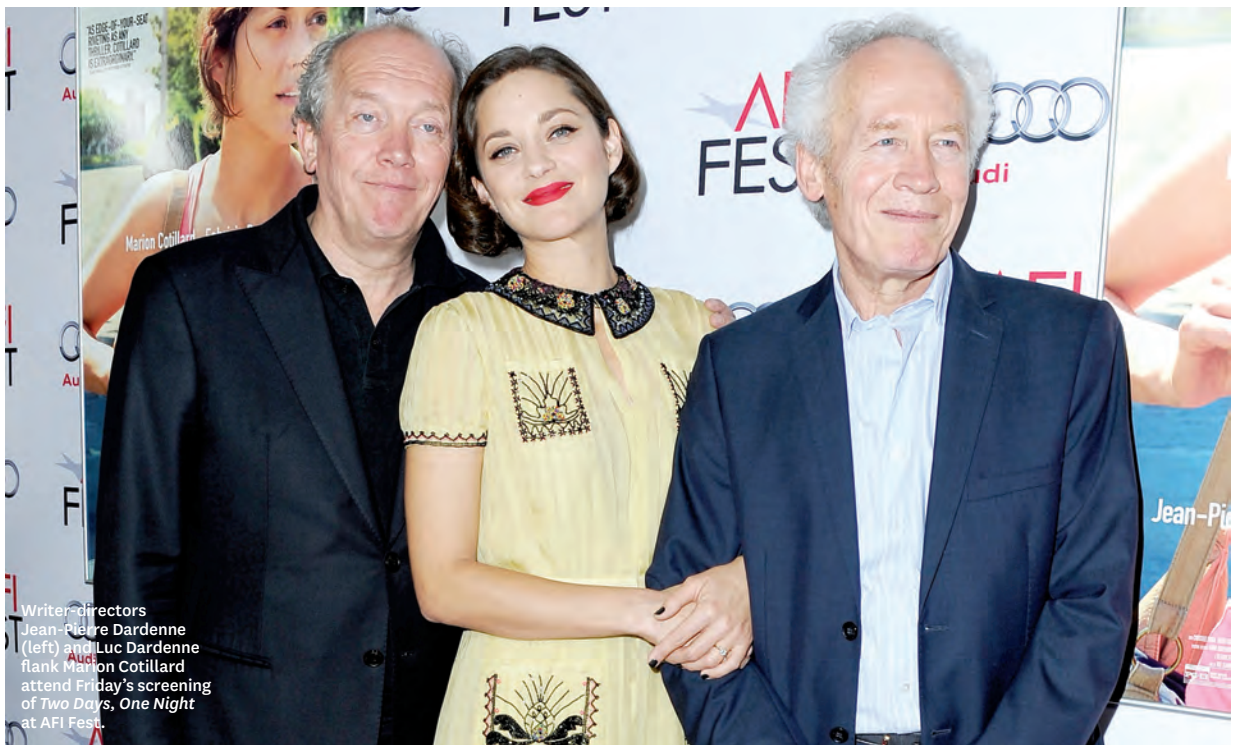
The film, directed and adapted by **Gilles Paquet-Brenner**, stars **Charlize Theron**, **Chloe Grace Moretz**, **Nicholas Hoult** and **Christina Hendricks**. The story centers on a woman (Theron) who survived the brutal killing of her family as a child. Years later, she's forced to revisit the events that left her life in shambles and put her brother in jail.



Theron

The deal comes on the heels of the strong success of *Gone Girl*,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Writer-directors Jean-Pierre Dardenne (left) and Luc Dardenne flank Marion Cotillard attend Friday's screening of *Two Days, One Night* at AFI Fest.

Bloom's *Nice Guys* Finishing First

Alex Walton and Ken Kao's company scores a major coup as the buzzy project starring Ryan Gosling and Russell Crowe becomes one of the hottest properties at AFM *By Pamela McClintock*

Director **Shane Black**'s upcoming *The Nice Guys*, starring **Russell Crowe** and **Ryan Gosling**, is popular around the world.

Alex Walton and **Ken Kao**'s sales and financing company Bloom has all but sold out of the project internationally. Foreign distributors were eager to get in on the high-profile project from Kao's Waypoint Entertainment and **Joel Silver**'s Silver Pictures.

Warner Bros. has already scooped up North American rights and will release the detective thriller in the U.S. on June 17, 2016, a prime summer berth.

Set in 1970s Los Angeles, *Nice Guys* stars Gosling as down-on-his-luck private eye Holland March and Crowe as hired leg-breaker Jackson Healy. The duo must work together to solve the case of a missing girl and the seemingly unrelated death of a porn star. During their investigation, they uncover a shocking conspiracy that reaches to the highest circles of power.

Bloom launched the project to foreign buyers at the Toronto Film Festival and has finished up sales at the American Film Market, now underway in Santa Monica. Waypoint is co-financing the film, while Bloom is handling international sales.

Crowe

Gosling

Territories sold include Australia and New Zealand (Roadshow), Benelux (Belga), Eastern Europe Block (Freeman), France (EuropaCorp), Germany (TMG), Greece (Odeon), Hong Kong, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam (PT Parkit), Indonesia (PT Amero), Israel (United King), Italy (Lucky Red), Latin America (SUN), Scandinavia (Mislabel), Singapore (Golden Village), South Africa (Times Media), South Korea (Scene & Sound), Spain (TriPictures), Switzerland (Ascot Elite), Turkey/ME/India-Pakistan (Italia) and the U.K. (Icon).

Matt Bomer, **Kim Basinger**, **Angourie Rice**, **Beau Knapp**, **Margaret Qualley** and **Keith David** also star in *Nice Guys*, which is executive produced by Kao, **Hal Sadoff** and **Michael Malone**.

Black (*Iron Man 3*) is now shooting *Nice Guys* in Atlanta from a script he wrote with **Anthony Bagarozzi**. The production will next move to Los Angeles.

Nice Guys is another early feather in the cap for Bloom, which also is handling **Gus Van Sant**'s *Sea of Trees*, starring **Matthew McConaughey**. Waypoint is financing that film as well. *Sea of Trees* is now in postproduction.

Bloom's AFM slate also includes *Elvis & Nixon*, starring **Kevin Spacey** as **Richard Nixon** and **Michael Shannon** as **Elvis Presley**. THR

THR HEAT INDEX

TANNAZ ANISI
The sales exec celebrated the one-year anniversary of her 13 Films at AFM with projects including supernatural thriller *Voice From the Stone* starring Emilia Clarke and actioner *Extortion* with Frank Grillo.

JACQUELINE LYANGA
The AFI fest director's "secret screening" on Nov. 11 is generating buzz about it being an awards contender, but it has AFM attendees grumbling about making the trek to Hollywood for an unknown quantity.

KNOW YOUR DEALMAKER

HAIM SABAN
Chairman and CEO, Saban Capital
On Thursday at the Beverly Hilton, the mogul raised $34 million for the Friends of the Israel Defense Forces. A day earlier, Saban Films picked up North American rights to Nicolas Cage's *The Trust* at AFM.

MEANWHILE, IN THE REAL WORLD ...

► **Robin Williams'** death was ruled a suicide. Autopsy results revealed his death was caused by asphyxia and hanging. Toxicology reports revealed antidepressants, caffeine and levodopa, a drug used to treat Parkinson's disease, in his system.

► **Jared Leto** may be under consideration for the role of the Joker in the Warner Bros. and DC Entertainment project *Suicide Squad*.

► Shares of **Lionsgate** jumped 4 percent Friday based on rumors of Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba taking a 37 percent stake in the company.

JONES, ALBA, YEOH ARE NEW CREW FOR *MECHANIC*

By Austin Siegemund-Broka

Tommy Lee Jones and **Jessica Alba** have joined **Jason Statham** in *Mechanic: Resurrection*, the sequel to the 2011 actioner about professional assassin **Arthur Bishop** (Statham).

Action veteran **Michelle Yeoh** also has joined the cast of the thriller, which German director **Dennis Gansel** (*The Wave*) will direct from a screenplay by **Philip Shelby, Tony Mosher, Rachel Long** and **Brian Pittman**.

Summit will release the next installment in the Millennium Films action franchise on Jan. 22, 2016.

The plot of *Mechanic: Resurrection* has Statham's character enjoying his retirement after having faked his own death to get out of the assassination game. But his past tracks him down.

After the woman he loves is kidnapped, he is forced to take on another job to get her back and complete a list of assassinations of the most dangerous men in the world.

Jones

The first *Mechanic*, from director **Simon West**, grossed in the neighborhood of $62 million worldwide.

Principal photography on *Mechanic: Resurrection* began Nov. 4 in Bangkok, Thailand. Millennium is handling world sales at AFM.

Alba

Jones will next appear in *The Homesman*, a Western he directed and co-wrote, which is generating Academy Awards buzz and will screen at AFI Fest next week.

Alba, who recently appeared in *Sin City: A Dame to Kill For*, is set for projects including the action comedy *Barely Lethal*, opposite **Samuel L. Jackson**, and the indie comedy *The Wright Girls*. Yeoh, meanwhile, is set to return in The Weinstein Co.'s *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* sequel. THR

Yoga CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Depp — and the photo of the girls didn't disappoint.

The movie, also written by Smith, centers on two teenage yoga nuts who have an afterschool job at a Manitoba convenience store. When an ancient evil rises from beneath Canada's crust and threatens their invitation to a 12th-grade party, the Colleens join forces with a manhunter from Montreal named Guy Lapointe (Depp) to fight for their lives.

Smith and Depp have been friends for years, and the same goes for their daughters.

StarStream Entertainment is financing and producing *Yoga Hosers* in association with Invincible Pictures, Abolitta Productions and Smith's SModcast Pictures. XYZ Films, which handled Tusk, is representing international rights and updating foreign buyers on the movie's progress at AFM. THR

Dark Places CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

starring **Ben Affleck** and **Rosamund Pike**. Flynn wrote the novel *Gone Girl* and adapted it for the **David Fincher** film, which has received critical praise and earned $288 million worldwide to date.

Dark Places, Flynn's second of three novels, is a *New York Times* bestseller. The film rights were scooped up in 2010.

Cathy Schulman, Matthew Rhodes, Azim Bolkiah, Matt Jackson, Beth Kono, A.J. Dix, Theron and **Stephane Marsil** produced *Dark Places*, while **Jeff Rice, Jose Levy, Matthias Ehrenberg, Nigel Sinclair, Guy East, Tobin Armbrust, Jillian Longnecker, Ginger Sledge** and **Peter Safran** executive produced. THR

Water Diviner

Warner Bros. Laps Up Crowe's *Water Diviner*

By Borys Kit

Warner Bros. has picked up domestic distribution for **Russell Crowe**'s period drama *The Water Diviner*. The studio has set a release date of April 24, 2015.

Crowe directed the movie and stars as an Australian who goes to Turkey to search for his two sons, who are missing after the battle of Gallipoli in 1919.

Olga Kurylenko and **Jai Courtney** also star.

Penned by **Andrew Knight** and **Andrew Anastasios**, *The Water Diviner* is being produced by **Andrew Mason** and **Troy Lum** for Hopscotch Features and by **Keith Rodger** for Fear of God Films.

Brett Ratner's RatPac Entertainment, Seven Network Australia and private investors are among the financiers. THR

TAIWAN SETS GRANTS FOR CO-PRODS

By Clifford Coonan

Taiwan will introduce $2.5 million in grants from the start of next year to encourage international movie co-productions to come to the self-ruled island and to help with promotion.

"We have a new policy to welcome more and more international co-productions happening in Taiwan. We have a new grant especially for international crew to come to Taipei. We have a grant of $1.5 million from Jan. 1," said **Jennifer Jao**, director of the Taipei Film Commission.

The grant will be officially launched tonight at the Taiwan Cinema Party at the American Film Market. THR

Rachael Leigh Cook

Welcome aboard, FALCON MEDIA GROUP (Germany)

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RATNER SEES CHINA AS BIZ 'SAVIOR'

By Alex Ben Black

Producer and film investor **Brett Ratner**, speaking during a panel at AFM on Friday, said "China is going to be our saving grace for this business."

"There's a time coming when a movie is going to be made here and it will cost a few hundred million dollars and I don't think the studio will even care if it gets a release here," he said. "They will care, but they can make hundreds of millions more in China."

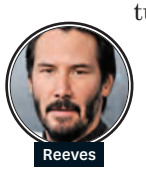
"Going forward our plan is to move on to China," the RatPac principal continued. "I went to China a few times and did some due diligence and really, while everybody in the U.S. is looking for Chinese money, I analyzed the marketplace and saw what the Chinese want is for their local theatrical films to thrive."

The AFM conference was moderated by **P. John Burke** of the law firm Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld and included UTA partner **Rich Klubeck** and *THR* executive editor **Matthew Belloni**. THR

Grodnik Teams With Kramer Duo

By Scott Roxborough

Producer **Daniel Grodnik** (*Bobby*) of Mass Hysteria Entertainment is teaming with penny stock investors **Curt** and **Seth Kramer** to launch Remark Films, a production shingle that aims to co-finance two to five feature films a year, budgeted in the $10 million and under range. Remark also will have funds for in-house development.


Reeves

The first project to come under the Remark banner will be *Grodnik's Daughter of God*, the feature debut from director **Gee Marlik Linton** that stars **Keanu Reeves**, **Ana de Armas** and **Mira Sorvino**.

The drama, now shooting in New York, follows a young woman (De Armas) who has a series of strange experiences as a cop (Reeves) searches for the truth behind his partner's death. THR

Yelchin Pitches in for *Baseballissimo*

The *Like Crazy* star will portray a minor-leaguer who takes the mound for a woeful Italian team

By Etan Vlessing

Anton Yelchin is suiting up for the lead role in *Baseballissimo*, a Canadian indie that **Jay Baruchel** co-wrote and stars in.

Yelchin

Baruchel

Yelchin will play Kyle Buffone, a rising minor-league player who gets detoured on the way to major-league stardom by pitching for the Peones, a baseball team in Italy. The film, structured as a Canada-Italy co-production from A71 Productions and Gefilter Productions, was written by Baruchel and **Jesse Chabot** and will be directed by **Jacob Tierney**.

"Having someone of Anton's skill level and talent understand and gravitate to the story that Jay and Jesse have so eloquently written is obviously a great coup for our team and the future success of this film," A71 Productions producer **David Miller** told *The Hollywood Reporter* from AFM.

The film is based on the book *Baseballissimo* by Canadian musician and writer **Dave Bidini**, who also executive produces with **Geddy Lee**, frontman for Canadian rockers Rush.

Tierney and Baruchel earlier collaborated on two films, *The Trotsky* and *Good Neighbors*. Baruchel, who counts Hollywood fare such as *She's Out of My League*, *Tropic Thunder* and *How to Train Your Dragon* among his credits, also has been active in Canadian films.

He penned the screenplay, along with **Evan Goldberg**, for *Goon*, a hockey comedy now headed for a sequel, and co-starred in **Jonathan Sobol**'s *The Art of the Steal*.

Yelchin is represented by CAA. Baruchel and Chabot are repped by CAA, Thruline Entertainment and **Jamie Feldman** at Lichter, Grossman. Tierney is repped by the Garry Goddard Agency and Circle of Confusion. THR

Falcom Taps Cook's *Mindgate*

By Scott Roxborough

Falcom Media Group has pounced on **Rachel Leigh Cook**'s sci-fi film *Mindgate*, taking German-language rights for the movie from Spanish production/distribution group Rebel Films.

Cook will play Dr. Susan Hobbs, a brilliant neuropsychologist who develops a technology to create a mental link between healthy volunteers and quadriplegic patients so that patients can experience full and satisfying sexual relationships despite a lack of feeling in most of their bodies. Susan herself suffers from Asperger syndrome, and she uses her technology to connect to, and understand, the emotions of her patients.

Mindgate will be the first feature from the Madrid-based shingle. Spanish sci-fi writer **Juan Miguel Aguilera**, who penned the screenplay to **Maria Lidon**'s *Stranded* (2001), wrote the script to *Mindgate* and will direct in his feature debut. THR

EUROPACORP SIGNS CANADIAN OUTPUT DEAL

By Etan Vlessing

Luc Besson's mini-major EuropaCorp has inked a deal with VVS Films to have its movies released in Canada.

Terms of the multiyear deal were not disclosed, but indie distributor VVS will handle EuropaCorp titles, starting with *The Transporter Legacy*, which is scheduled to reach Canadian theaters on June 19.

The Canadian agreement follows EuropaCorp and Relativity Media unveiling a joint venture to release movies from both companies in the United States.

VVS Films, which releases around 40 movie titles each year, earlier pacted with EuropaCorp to release *Brick Mansions*, which starred the late **Paul Walker**, in Canada.

"We are very pleased to work with VVS in this major Canadian market. After creating our distribution company in the United States, it is a next step to ensure the success of our films in the English language," said EuropaCorp CEO **Christophe Lambert** in a statement.

EuropaCorp, based in Paris, was founded by producer and director Besson, who owns more than 40 percent of the equity in the publicly traded entity. THR

I Am Here

Brainstorm Takes *I Am Here*

By Scott Roxborough

Brainstorm Media has picked up North American rights to *I Am Here*, an English-language drama from Danish director **Anders Morgenthaler** (*Princess*) starring **Kim Basinger**.

The film sees the Oscar-winning actress playing a successful businesswoman who, when she is told she is infertile, becomes desperate to have a child. Her efforts eventually lead her into the shady underworld of infant adoptions in Eastern Europe.

I Am Here premiered at Fantastic Fest in Austin in wzSeptember. The movie co-stars **Peter Stormare** (*Fargo*), **Jordan Prentice** (*In Bruges*) and **Sebastian Schipper** (*Run Lola Run*).

The North American deal for the film was negotiated between Brainstorm president **Meyer Shwarzstein** and **Susan Wendt**, head of sales at TrustNordisk, the Scandinavia company that's handling international sales on the title at AFM. THR

CHINA 3D DIGITAL DISTRIBUTION LTD

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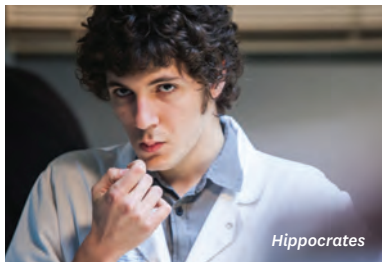
AFM *In Brief*



DISTRIB FILMS LIKES LILTI'S *HIPPOCRATES*

Distrib Films U.S. has picked up North American rights to French dramedy *Hippocrates*, from Le Pacte. The sophomore feature from director **Thomas Lilti** stars newcomer **Vincent Lacoste** as a young medical student starting a 6-month internship in the public hospital ward run by his father. *Hippocrates* debuted in Cannes, where it was the closing-night film for the Critics' Week sidebar.

UNCORK'D HOWLS AT *BLOOD MOON*

Genre specialists Uncork'd Entertainment has picked up North American rights to *Blood Moon*, a werewolf Western, from British sales group Jinga Films. The film stars **Shaun Dooley** as a gunslinger who comes to the rescue of a stagecoach full of passengers who are being terrorized by mythical creatures known as skinwalkers.

LEVELK SERVES UP MIKKELSEN'S *CHICKEN*

Danish sales outfit LevelK has closed multiple presales in Europe for *Men and Chicken*, the new black comedy from the prolific **Anders Thomas Jensen** (*Adam's Apples*) that features *Hannibal* star **Mads Mikkelsen**. LevelK closed with Imagine for Benelux, Film Europe for the Czech Republic and Slovakia and with Vertigo for Hungary.

Mikkelsen

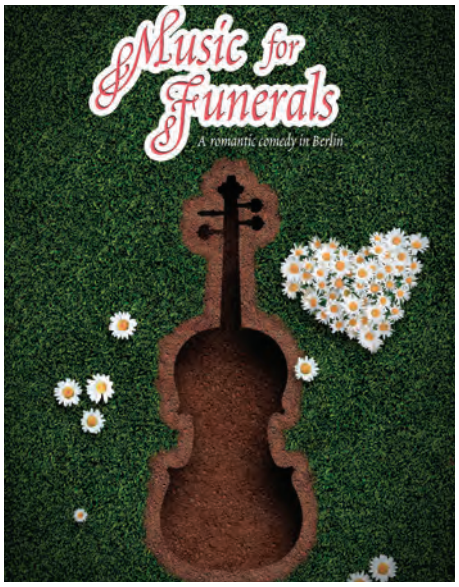
THE 2014 AFM POSTER AWARDS

THR pays tribute to the most amusing and over-the-top promotional materials from the year's market

MOST VIOLENT THING TO COME OUT OF THE SEVENTIES

***Discopath* (Canada)**

Discopath was made for loving you. Do not question this, or Discopath willle freak out, which will knock you all the way back to the Y.M.C.A. You'll be prayin' to be stayin' alive. But don't worry ... you will survive.



MOST UNFORTUNATE BODY TYPE FOR PASSING THROUGH TURNSTILES

***Music for Funerals* (Germany)**

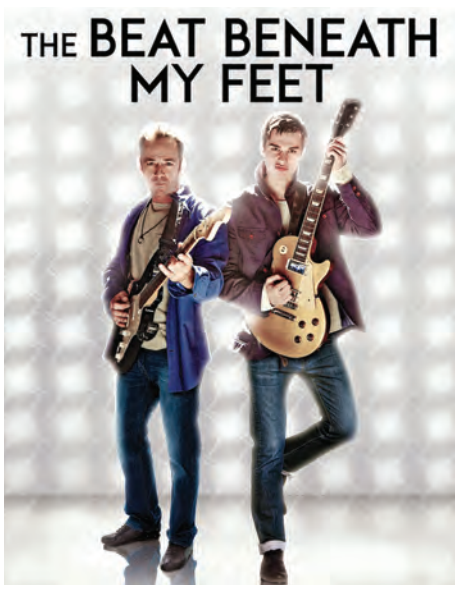
People said quite a few things about Bill after he passed away, but one of those things was undeniable: His body was shaped exactly like a cello.

IF YOU WERE THERE, YOU'LL KNOW. IF YOU WEREN'T, YOU'LL WISH YOU HAD BEEN.
A FILM BY ELAINE CONSTANTINE
NORTHERN SOUL
ELLIOT JAMES LANGRIDGE
JOSHUA WHITEHOUSE

MOST JAW-DROPPING IMAGERY

***Northern Soul* (U.K.)**

Poster Designer: "I was thinking about only using shots from the movie where actors have their mouths open. I mean, what could go wrong with that?"



MOST IN NEED OF SOME ANSWERS

***The Beat Beneath My Feet* (U.K.)**

Is it just us, or does Luke Perry's face on the poster look like it's just begging the question: "How the hell did I get here?" Good question, Luke Perry. Good question.

ABLAZE IMAGE Ltd.

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TAIWAN CINEMA

Visit us at the Loews Hotel, 6 Atrium 6C

Screenings

Black & White: The Dawn of Justice

International Sales : June WU junewu@ablazeimage.com

Nov. 8 19:00 @ Doubletree 1

Dream Flight

International Sales : Dennis LU dennis@pmctaipei.net

Nov. 6 19:00 @ Doubletree 2

Nov. 9 19:00 @ Doubletree 2

Nov. 9 08:45 @ AMC Santa Monica 7

文化部 MINISTRY OF CULTURE

TAIPEI FILM COMMISSION

Swallow Wings Films Co., Ltd.

Flash Forward Entertainment

The Unison Company

Khan Entertainment Co., Ltd.

Tang Moon International Productions Co., Ltd.

Zoom Hunt International Productions Co., Ltd.

Central Motion Picture Corporation

TAIPEI FACTORY II

MOSTRA INTERNAZIONALE
D'ARTE CINEMATOGRAFICA
la Biennale di Venezia 2014
Venezia 71 – Out of Competition

: ALLA SCOPERTA DI TAIPEI THE STORIES OF TAIPEI, THE PASSION OF THE ISLAND

TAIPEI FILM COMMISSION PRESENTS "TAIPEI FACTORY II" DIRECTED BY HSIEH CHUN-YI, CHO LI, HOU CHI-JAN EXECUTIVE PRODUCER YEH JUFENG, LEE LIEH PRODUCER JENNIFER JAO PRODUCTION MANAGER GRACE XIE PROJECT MANAGER IVY CHIANG INTERNATIONAL COORDINATOR HERMIA LIN, GIULIA CARBONE TAIPEI LOCATION COORDINATOR GAVIN LIN, YI DA JIANG, ADON LU AGREEMENT COORDINATOR BRYCE TSAO, LUISA CHEN ASSISTANT TO MS. LEE SHIH-TA CHANG ASSISTANT TO MS. YEH YEN-CHEN LAI STILL PHOTOGRAPHER MARK WU, D.Z. WANG, YU SHU SUNG GRAPHIC TSAN,YY POSTPRODUCTION TAIPEI POSTPRODUCTION CORP. SOUND 3H SOUND STUDIO LTD. OVERSEAS DISTRIBUTOR RAI CINEMA OVERSEAS PROMOTION YALUN WANG

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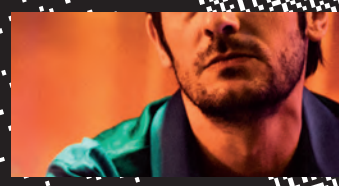
LUCA
BY HSIEH CHUN-YI

SOAP OPERA
BY CHO LI

THE THRILL
BY HOU CHI-JAN



Taipei Film Commission and its partners

In the face of global economic slowdown, filmmakers looking for new opportunities for funding turn to co-produce internationally. Film commissions across different regions have played a key role in integrating resources for co-productions. Taipei Film Commission, since its establishment in 2008, has been actively seeking international cooperation for film co-productions. For me, the main objectives of international co-productions are to minimize differences and to harmonize relations between countries in the West and in the East, as I am certain that the distinctive characteristics of cinematic productions in the East has been taken as a symbol of inner peace for many lovers across the world.

With this goal in mind, Taipei Film Commission inked partnership with Ile de France Film Commission and Rai Cinema in 2010 and 2012 respectively. The exchange of talents and professionals in the film and television industries between Taiwan/France and between Taiwan/Italy in recent years has resulted in a substantial upgrade of the local film and television industries. We've witnessed four Taiwanese directors participating Taipei Factory I created a buzz at the Directors' Fortnight of the Cannes Film Festival in May 2013. That same year in November, French director

NEVER GIVE UP YOUR DREAM
Ann HSU
Riu-Jia CHANG
Dream Flight
夢飛
A KHAN LEE FILM
Co-director LI-SHIOU SHIAO
Cast Chung-Hua TOU , Jieh-Wen KING , Cheng-han ZHONG , Yi-ti YAO , Danny LIANG , Kang-Che CHIANG
Presented by Encore Film Co., Ltd.
Encore Film

Dream Fight

NEVER GIVE UP YOUR DREAM

Writer-Director Khan Lee

- Nov. 6 19:00 @ Doubletree 2
- Nov. 9 19:00 @ Doubletree 2

Baby Steps

A NON-TRADITIONAL FAMILY WITH THE MOST TRADITIONAL OF VALUES

Oscar-Winning Producer Li-Kong Hsu
Golden Horse-Winning Actress Ah-Leh Gua
Producer Stephen Israel and Writer-Director Barney Cheng
Two decades after *The Wedding Banquet*,
Oscar-Winning Producer Li-Kong Hsu brings you *Baby Steps*.

Luc Besson came to Taipei and shot his film Lucy on location here. Mr. Besson praised his Taiwanese film crew for their professionalism and thanked the Taipei City Government for its assistance.

Now I am more than happy to introduce to you Taipei Factory II –Alla Scoperta di Taipei, an omnibus feature comprised of three short stories directed by three Taiwanese directors and starring three talented Italian actors. The Taiwanese directors—HOU Chi-jan, CHO Li, and HSIEH Chun-yi, as outstanding as anticipated, demonstrate their strong commitment to making original and thought-provoking films. The three Italian actors—Marco FOSCHI, Margot SIKABONYI and Michele CESARI give impressive performances. We are looking forward to the next collaboration with you! When the East meets the West—as it is meant to be!

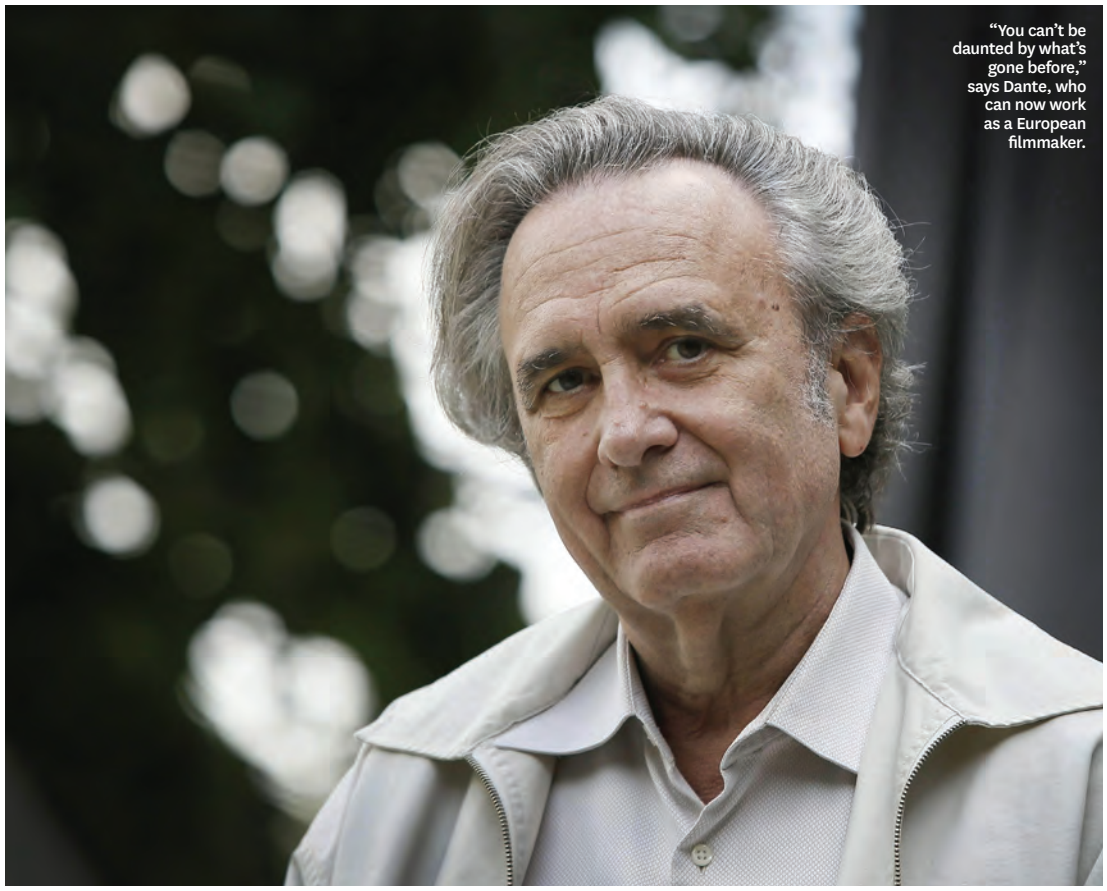
By Jennifer JAO,
Director of Taipei Film Commission

TAIPEI FILM COMMISSION

Joe Dante

The man behind *The Howling* and *Gremlins*, now an Italian citizen, dishes on his new vampire-werewolf tale, the magic of Rome and taking ideas from anyone

By Ariston Anderson



"You can't be daunted by what's gone before," says Dante, who can now work as a European filmmaker.

WITH A BRAND NEW ITALIAN PASSPORT, director Joe Dante, most famously known for *Gremlins*, now is eligible for European subsidies. And he's looking to the continent to package his next slate of films. Up first is *Ombra Amore*, a werewolves vs. vampires, *Romeo and Juliet* tale set in Rome and based on a script by noted comic book writer Greg Pack. Dante, his first time producing, and Elizabeth Stanley took more than 40 meetings at New Cinema Network during the Rome Film Festival to set up the film (he also will direct). *THR* caught up with the New Jersey-born filmmaker in the Eternal City, where he revealed the limitations of packaging films in Europe, the problem with the *Twilight* series and how to keep genre audiences satisfied.

How did you get an Italian passport?

It was a lot of effort. I got it through my grandparents, but you have to have an unbroken lineage. So luckily, I managed to find a link all the way to my great, great grandfather, whose paperwork about his baptism and birth I just managed to find yesterday in a little town called Montefredane. The village priest took out the book and showed me the info. So now I can work in Europe as a European.

What's *Ombra Amore* about?

It's *Romeo and Juliet* with werewolves and vampires and some politics, which makes it perfect for Rome, because Rome is all politics.

And the plot involves the global financial crisis?

We have old world vampires who go back a long way and used to have a lot of money. They have siphoned it all off in bad investments that were promoted by the werewolves, who are American and English bankers. When you go into the vampire's house, you see places where great paintings once hung but had to be sold to keep up their lifestyle. And of course, they have to feed themselves, which they do by keeping blood in their refrigerator as opposed to going out and eating people, which the werewolves have no compunction about. It's two different kinds of civilizations against each other.

Is it shot in English?

Yeah, in English for export. And I know there are a lot of good backup people here. There are good crews, good camera people, good makeup people and effects, of course. Now you can go anywhere in the world and do effects. You can do them on your computer.

Who would be in your ideal cast?

Based on what we find in terms of finances, we'll dictate our cast. If it's German money, it's this guy. If it's Italian money, it's this guy. It will be European actors, maybe one American. I don't want to say, because if I say one of them and then I get the money from Latvia, then you have to have a Latvian actor. We've all seen movies over the past 50 years where they've had these oddly matched international casts and you've wondered, "What is that guy doing in the movie?" And it's because his territory is going to be sold.

Do you think the world needs another vampire/werewolf movie?

Frankly, no. But that's not going to stop me. It hasn't stopped all the other guys. I tend to not think of it as an adjunct of the *Underworld* movies or the *Twilight* movies. To me, it's something different, and you can't be daunted by what's gone before. There are many things we don't want to do from the *Twilight* series.

For example?

Well, I think the effects for the werewolf transformations were misguided. It's not that they didn't do a good job. Conceptually, I just didn't buy it. And our film is not quite for the same audience. It's for an "all audience." It's not so specifically aimed at teenagers.

How will you tackle the werewolf transformations?

My last one was in *The Howling*, and it seemed to create quite a stir. That was in 1980, and there have been obvious technological advances since then. So we have new ideas about how to do it, when to do it, where to do it and how often to do it. Part of the fun is engineering these things. But it's harder to do because the audience is so sophisticated about the tropes of the genre after seeing the *Scream* movies, which of course make fun of all of the conventions.

Is there one principle you abide by when directing?

We really never know what these movies are going to be like until we make them because when you make a movie, sometimes an element of the movie will stand out that you never even imagined. You have to make the best version of that movie, and if it happens to veer wildly from your original idea, then you have to go there. And that goes to a simple crewmember saying, "What if we did this?" And you can't just say, "Who are you? You're not the director! We're not going to do that." No, of course you're going to do it. If it's a good idea, you're going to do it.

Your movies famously allude to other films. Are there any Italian horror movies you'll be looking to for this film?

I have a lot of favorite Italian horror movies, mostly from the '60s and '70s. Mario Bava's films all have a specific pictorial styling and use of color, which I have frequently stolen for movies. It will have a gothic look to it. But it also needs to have modernity, because that's the clash of the ancient and the new. It's part of Rome, and that's what's so appealing about shooting the picture here. THR

BY THE NUMBERS

$1.5M
Budget for 1981's *The Howling*

$153M
Domestic gross for 1984's *Gremlins*

$297M
Gremlins gross in 2014 dollars

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TODAY

8:30 AM Loews 1, ***Beloved Sisters***, Global Screen Gmbh, 138 mins.; Broadway 2, ***La French***, Gaumont, 135 mins.

8:45 AM Broadway 1, ***Nobody From Nowhere***, Pathe Int'l (Fr), 118 mins.; AMC 6, ***Testament of Youth***, Protagonist Pictures, 126 mins.; Tunnel Post #1, ***We Are Young, We Are Strong***, Beta Cinema, 127 mins.

9:00 AM AMC 4, ***Before I Disappear***, Electric Entertainment, 93 mins.; Broadway 4, ***Electric Boogaloo: The Wild, Untold Story of Cannon Films***, Mongrel Media Inc., 105 mins.; Fairmont 3, ***Gone Astray***, Goliath Film & Media Holdings Inc., 85 mins.; Fairmont 4, ***Housebound***, Films Distribution, 109 mins.; Fairmont 2, ***I-Lived***, Bleiberg Entertainment Llc., 96 mins.; Doubletree #1, ***Itsi Bitsi***, The Match Factory, 107 Mins.; AMC 2, ***La Famille Belier***, SND M6 Groupe, 104 mins.; Fairmont 1, ***Paper Planes 3D***, Arclight Films, 100 mins.; Doubletree #2, ***Pause***, Picture Tree International Gmbh, 82 mins.; Loews 3, ***Preggoland***, Lightning Entertainment, 109 mins.; Broadway 3, ***Ride***, 6 Sales, 93 mins.; Loews 2, ***The Dream Children***, Media Luna New Films Ug, 98 mins.; Fairmont 5 , ***The Great Hypnotist***, Fortissimo Films, 100 mins.

11:00 AM AMC 7, ***But Always***, Emperor Motion Pictures, 105 mins.; Fairmont 2, ***Casual Encounters***, Carnaby International, 86 mins.; Fairmont 3, ***Club Life***, Bleiberg Entertainment Llc., 92 mins.; Loews 1, ***Conspiracy of Silence***, Angel Grace Productions, 90 mins.; Doubletree #1, ***Electroboy***, Picture Tree International Gmbh, 113 mins.; Doubletree #2, ***Jenny's Wedding***, The Solution Entertainment Group; AMC 3, ***Love Island***, The Match Factory, 90 mins.; AMC 2, ***Nova***, Creative Content Association Malaysia, 106 mins.; Broadway 2, ***On Any Sunday***, Red Bull Media House, 95 mins.; Broadway 3, ***Ooops! Noah Is Gone...***, Global Screen Gmbh, 80 mins.; AMC 6, ***Robot Overlords***, Embankment Films Ltd., 90 mins.; Fairmont 1, ***The Black Rider***, Pure Flix Entertainment, 98 mins.; Broadway 1, ***The Duke of Burgundy***, Protagonist Pictures, 105 mins.; Loews 2, ***The Identical***, Vision Films, 107 mins.; Loews 3, ***The Man in the Orange Jacket***, Wide, 71 mins.; Tunnel Post #1, Torrente 5, ***Mission Eurovegas***, Filmsharks Int'l, 102 mins.; Fairmont 4, ***T-Pang Rescue***, M-Line Distribution, 80 mins.; Broadway 4, ***Vampire Sisters 2 — Bats in the Belly***, Arri Worldsales 94 mins.; AMC 4, ***Walter***, Beta Cinema, 88 mins.

1:00 PM Loews 1, ***AB Negative***, Jinga Films, 85 mins.; Fairmont 1, ***7 Minutes***, Premiere Entertainment Group, 92 mins.; Tunnel Post #1, ***Burying the Ex,*** Voltage Pictures; AMC 1, ***Charles and I***, Applied Art Productions, 115 mins.; Fairmont 5, ***Digging Up the Marrow***, Kaleidoscope Film Distribution Ltd., 88 mins.; AMC 4, ***Easy Sex, Sad Movies***, Filmax International, 90 mins.; Broadway 1, ***Foodies***, Fortissimo Films, 94 mins.; AMC 3, ***Frog Kingdom***, Golden Network Asia Ltd., 86 mins.; AMC 7, ***From the Dark***, MPI Media Group, 90 mins.; Loews 3, ***Kill Game***, VMI Worldwide, 102 mins.; Fairmont 4, ***L.A. Slasher***, Archstone Distribution, 86 mins.; Doubletree #1, ***Messi***, Film Factory Entertainment, 90 mins.; AMC 2, ***Ruth & Alex***, Myriad Pictures; Broadway 2, ***Skin Trade***, Hyde Park Int'l, 96 mins; Fairmont 2, ***Stomping Ground***, California Pictures Inc.; Loews 2, ***Tell***, Arclight Films, 100 mins.; Fairmont 3, ***The Candlelight Murders***, Goliath Film & Media Holdings, Inc., 86 mins.; Broadway 3, ***The Diabolical***, Content Media Corp., 90 mins.; Broadway 4, ***The Tragedy***, Silver Spear Pictures, 103 mins.; Doubletree #2, ***Wrecked***, Beta Cinema, 93 mins.

3:00 Fairmont 4, ***A Dark Reflection***, Artist View Entertainment Inc., 95 mins.; AMC 5, ***Bat Outta Hell***, Tricoast Worldwide, 95 mins.; Fairmont 5, ***Behavior***, Latido, 108 mins.; Doubletree #1, ***Beyond the Lights***, Relativity International; Broadway 1, ***Born Wild***, Lighthouse Pictures Llc., 104 mins.; AMC 2, ***Don't Go Breaking My Heart 2***, Media Asia Film; Loews 1, ***Encounter***, Sahara Vision Productions, 82 mins.; Doubletree #2, ***Hungry Hearts***, Radiant Films International, 109 mins.; Loews 3, Indigenous, ***Lightning Entertainment***, 86 mins.; Loews 2, ***Kingston Paradise***, California Pictures Inc., 84 mins.; Broadway 2, ***My Old Lady***, Protagonist Pictures, 107 mins.; Ocean Scr #, ***Northern Soul***, The Little Film Co., 100 mins.; Fairmont 2, ***Rio I Love You***, Westend Films, 109 mins.; Broadway 4, ***Saint Laurent***, EuropaCorp, 150 mins.; AMC 7, ***Space Dogs: Adventure to the Moon***, Epic Pictures Group, 90 mins.; Fairmont 3, ***Teen Lust***, Darclight Films; Tunnel Post #1, ***The Little Medic: The Secret Mission of the Bodynauts***, Beta Cinema, 75 mins.; Broadway 3, ***Wicked Flying Monkeys 3D,*** Filmsharks Int'l, 90 mins.; Fairmont 1, ***Wine of Summer***, New Films International, 91 mins.; AMC 1, ***Wyrmwood***, Altitude Film Sales, 92 mins.

5:00 PM AMC 1, ***Accused***, Fortissimo Films, 97 mins.; Fairmont 2, ***Dancer and the Dame***, Pure Flix Entertainment, 90 mins.; Loews 2, ***Dinosaur Island***, Arclight Films; Fairmont 3, ***Every Secret Thing***, Hyde Park International, 93 mins.; AMC 2, ***Gates of the Sun***, Wtfilms, 90 mins.; Broadway 1, ***Gloria! The Price of Fame***, 6 Sales, 100 mins.; AMC 5, ***Madame Bovary***, Radiant Films International, 118 mins.; Doubletree #2, ***Manglehorn***, Westend Films, 97 mins.; Fairmont 1, ***Mexico Barbaro***, Raven Banner Entertainment, 101 mins.; Loews 1, ***Monster Truck***, VMI Worldwide, 94 mins.; Fairmont 5, ***Once in a Lifetime***, TF1 International, 100 mins.; Broadway 4, ***Saint Laurent***, EuropaCorp, 150 mins.; Loews 3, ***The Green Prince***, Global Screen Gmbh 101 mins.; AMC 7, ***The Last 5 Years***, The Exchange, 94 mins.; AMC 4, ***The Road Within***, Annapurna International (Panorama Media); Ocean Scr #, ***There Are Monsters,*** The Works International, 90 mins.; Tunnel Post #1, ***Tokyo Fiancee***, Films Distribution, 100 mins.; Doubletree #1, ***Tour De Force***, Beta Cinema, 95 mins.

7:00 PM Doubletree #1, ***Black and White: The Dawn of Justice***,Ablaze Image, 126 mins.; Loews 1, ***Encounter***,

Madame Bovary

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Sahara Vision Productions, 82 Mins.; Fairmont 2, ***Field of Lost Shoes***, VMI Worldwide, 96 mins.; Loews 2, ***Finding Gaston***, Wide, 78 mins.; Loews 3, ***Pernicious***, VMI Worldwide, 93 mins.; Tunnel Post #1, ***Reckless***, Dutch Features Global Entertainment, 95 mins.; Doubletree #2, ***Savva***, Glukoza Production, 115 mins.; Fairmont 1, ***Split Second***, Goliath Film & Media Holdings Inc., 82 mins.; Fairmont 4, ***Symphony of the Wild***, Shoreline Entertainment, 90 mins.; Fairmont 3, ***The Tenor Lirico Spinto***, More In Group, 121 mins.; Fairmont 5, ***Wish You Well***, American Cinema International, 108 mins.

SUNDAY, NOV. 9

8:45 AM AMC 7, ***Black and White: The Dawn of Justice***, Ablaze Image, 126 mins.; AMC 6, ***Labyrinth of Lies***, Beta Cinema, 121 mins.; AMC 1 ***Teenkahon***, Little Lamb Films Pvt. Ltd., 124 mins.

9:00 Tunnel Post #1, ***Captain Sabertooth and the Treasure of Lama Rama***, Sola Media Gmbh, 90 mins.; Doubletree #1, ***Fire***, Latido, 103 mins.; Broadway 2, ***Get Santa***, Altitude Film Sales; Fairmont 1, ***Kelly & Cal***, Electric Entertainment, 107 mins.; AMC 4, ***Manhole***, Lotte Entertainment, 101 mins.; Broadway 1, ***Ned Rifle***, Fortissimo Films, 85 mins.; Broadway 4, ***Now Add Honey***, Lightning Entertainment; Fairmont 2, ***Rio I Love You,*** Westend Films, 109 mins.; Broadway 3, ***Santa Claus!***, Kinology; AMC 3, ***Second Coming***, Protagonist Pictures, 105 mins.; Loews 2, ***Suburban Gothic***, Red Sea Media Inc., 90 mins.; Fairmont 3, ***Tell***, Arclight Films; Fairmont 4, ***United Passions***, TF1 International, 100 mins.; Loews 2, ***Buzzard***, Media Luna New Films Ug, 97 mins.; AMC 3, ***Camera***, Fortissimo Films, 90 mins.

11:00 AM Fairmont 3, ***Dragon Nest: Warriors Dawn***, All Rights Entertainment Ltd., 90 mins.; Loews 1, ***Farah Goes Bang***, Angel Grace Productions, 90 mins.; AMC 2, ***How to Make Love Like an Englishman***, The Solution Entertainment Group, 100 mins.; Fairmont 4, ***L.A. Slasher***, Archstone Distribution, 86 mins.; Broadway 2, ***One Night in Istanbul***, The Little Film Co., 93 mins.; AMC 7, ***Pressure***, Embankment Films Ltd., 90 mins.; Fairmont 5, ***Stephen King's A Good Marriage***, Screen Media, 90 mins.; Broadway 4, ***Streif***, Red Bull Media House, 110 mins.; AMC 5, ***The 108 Demon-Kings***, EuropaCorp; Fairmont 1, ***The Hatching***, Phoenix Worldwide Entertainment, 90 mins.; Broadway 1, ***The Silent Storm,*** Westend Films, 102 mins.; AMC 1, ***To Life!***, Global Screen Gmbh, 86 mins.; Doubletree #, ***Torrente 5***, Mission Eurovegas Filmsharks Int'l, 102 mins.; AMC 4, ***Tour De Force***, Beta Cinema, 95 mins.; Loews 3, ***Transgression***, Wide, 100 mins.

1:00 PM, AMC 7, ***Against The Sun***, Goldcrest Films International, 99 mins.; Fairmont 5, ***Alex of Venice***, Screen Media; AMC 3, ***Battle Scars***, Tricoast Worldwide 96 mins.; Loews 1, ***Beijing***, ***New York***, Easternlight Films, 110 mins.; Fairmont 3, ***Blood Moon***, Jinga Films, 90 mins.; Fairmont 1, ***Coming In***, Global Screen Gmbh, 104 mins.; AMC 2, ***Cub***, Kinology; Broadway 2, ***Far From Men***, Pathe International (Fr), 90 mins.; Broadway 4, ***Goodnight Mommy***, Films Distribution, 99 mins.; Loews 3, ***Hostiles***, Wide; Fairmont 2, ***Match***, Premiere Entertainment Group, 90 mins.; AMC 4, ***Monsters Dark Continent***, Protagonist Pictures, 135 mins.; Loews 2, ***Road to Your Heart***, Princ Films, 112 mins.; Broadway 3, ***Samba***, Gaumont, 115 mins.; Fairmont 4, ***The Curse of Downers Grove***, Myriad Pictures, 90 mins.; Doubletree #1, ***The Pirate's Code***, Highland Film Group; AMC 5, ***Will and Testament Tony Benn Film***, Praslin Pictures, 95 mins.

3:00 PM Broadway 4, ***Atlantic***, Fortissimo Films, 94 mins.; Loews 2, ***Convict***, Carnaby International, 110 mins.; AMC 1, ***Darker Than Night***, 6 Sales, 100 mins.; Tunnel Post #1, ***El Americano 3D: The Movie***, Filmsharks Int'l; AMC 3, ***Frog Kingdom***, Golden Network Asia Ltd., 86 mins.; Fairmont 4, ***June***, Raven Banner Entertainment; Fairmont 2, ***Millionaire Dog***, Deaplaneta, 90 mins.; AMC 2, ***Queen***, Applied Art Productions, 115 mins.; AMC 6, ***Sword of Vengeance***, Protagonist Pictures, 100 mins.; Ocean Scr #, ***The Barber***, The Little Film Co., 95 mins.; Fairmont 1, ***The Black Rider***, Pure Flix Entertainment, 98 mins.; Loews 3, ***The Circle***, Wide, 101 mins.; Loews 1, ***The Dead***, 2 Jinga Films, 94 mins.; Broadway 3, ***The Eyes Diary***, Sahamongkolfilm International Co. Ltd., 100 mins.; Broadway 1, ***The Farewell Party***, Beta Cinema; AMC 5, ***The Gate***, Gaumont; Broadway 2, ***The Great Gilly Hopkins***, Westend Films, 103 mins.; Fairmont 3, ***The Last Knights,*** Arclight Films; AMC 7, ***The Legend of Longwood***, Global Screen Gmbh, 100 mins.; Doubletree #2, ***They Are All Dead***, Latido 93 mins.; Doubletree #1, ***Wind Walkers***, Tricoast Worldwide, 85 mins.; AMC 4, ***Yellowbird (3D)***, SC Films International, 90 mins.

5:00 PM Loews 1, ***Beltracchi***, Global Screen Gmbh, 104 mins.; Broadway 1, ***Big Game***, Altitude Film Sales, 90 mins.; Ocean Scr #, ***Champs***, The Works International, 90 mins.; Fairmont 2, ***Hidden in the Woods***, Wtfilms; AMC 5, ***Last Summer***, Fortissimo Films, 90 mins.; Fairmont 1, ***Last Weekend***, Aldamisa, 94 mins.; AMC 3, ***October Gale***, Myriad Pictures; Broadway 4, ***Ride***, 6 Sales, 93 mins.; AMC 4, ***Savva***, Glukoza Production, 115 mins.; Fairmont 4, ***Sparks & Embers***, Phoenix Worldwide Entertainment, 84 mins.; Loews 2, ***Submerged***, Darclight Films; Doubletree #1, ***The Face of an Angel***, Westend Films, 100 mins.; Loews 3, ***The Gambler Wide***, 109 mins.; AMC 6, ***The Last 5 Years***, The Exchange, 94 mins.; AMC 1, ***The Lies of the Victors***, The Match Factory, 112 mins.; Doubletree #2, ***Vengeance of an Assassin***, Sahamongkolfilm International Co. Ltd., 93 mins.; Fairmont 3, ***Virus X***, Goliath, Film & Media Holdings Inc., 85 mins.

7:00 PM Fairmont 5, ***37: A Final Promise,*** California Pictures, Inc., 94 mins.; Fairmont 3, ***Any Day***, VMI Worldwide, 100 Mins.; Fairmont 1, ***Beloved Sisters***, Global Screen Gmbh, 138 mins.; Doubletree #2, ***Dream Flight***, Encore Film Co. Ltd., 140 mins.; Fairmont 4, ***The Better Angels***, Electric Entertainment, 95 mins.; Doubletree #1, ***The Tenor Lirico Spinto***, More In Group, 121 mins.

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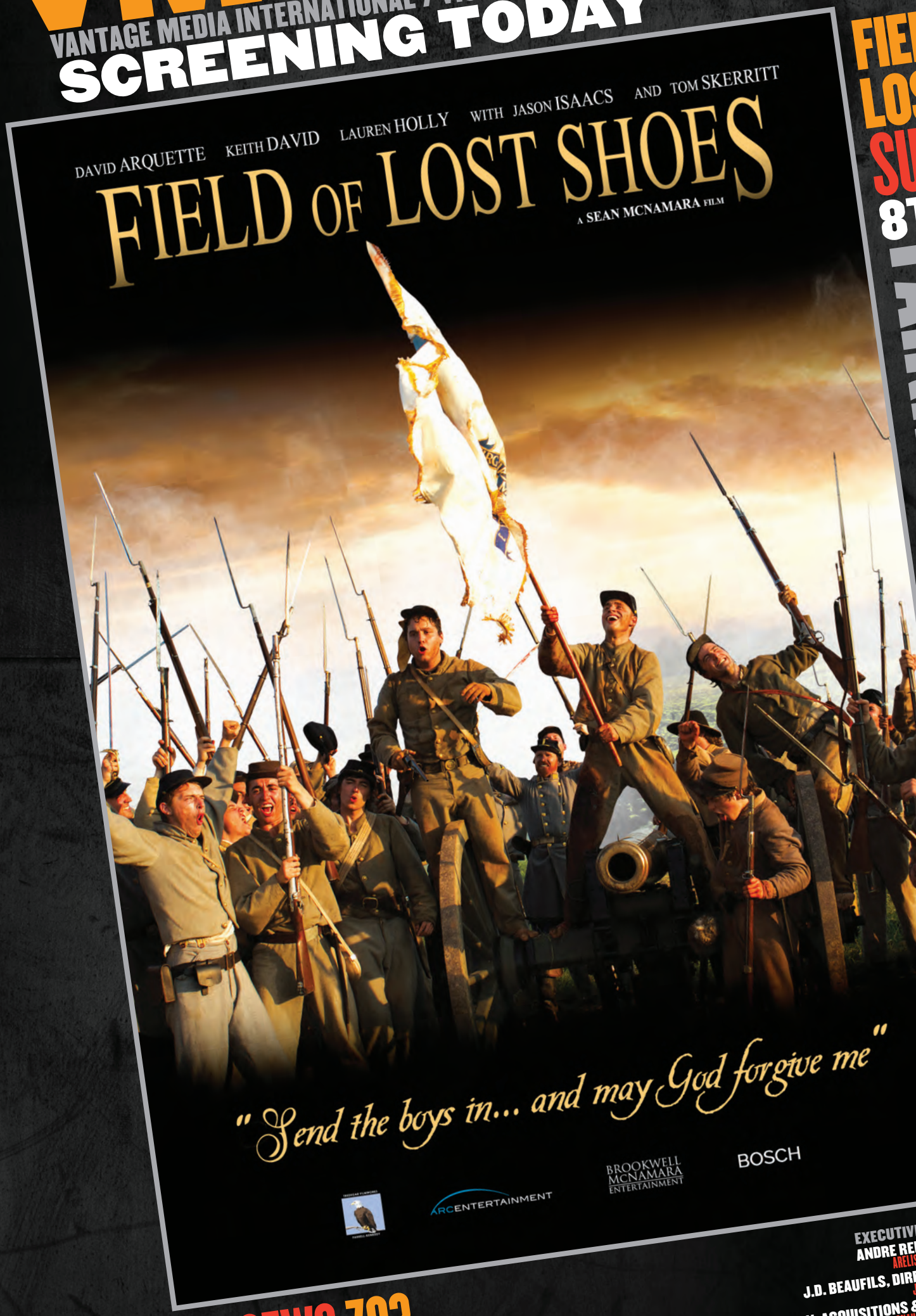
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Mbatha-Raw learns it's lonely at the top.

Beyond the Lights

Gugu Mbatha-Raw plays a nascent pop star shrinking from the spotlight in Gina Prince-Bythewood's familiar but fun drama

BY DAVID ROONEY

MIDWAY THROUGH *BEYOND THE LIGHTS*, MINNIE DRIVER'S character, a brassy South London showbiz mother who gives *Gypsy*'s Rose a run for her money, snarls at her flailing supernova daughter, "Congratulations, you're a bloody cliche!" That might be true, but Gina Prince-Bythewood's entertaining music-biz melodrama is no less satisfying for the familiarity of its soapy trajectory. As the stunned deer in the headlights of fame, Gugu Mbatha-Raw is incandescent, playing a vulnerable young woman suffocating in the processed packaging of a sizzling pop goddess. Strong chemistry with co-star Nate Parker and a pulsing soundtrack should help give the film legitimate commercial prospects.

Predictable or not, it's easy to shove aside all thoughts of guilty pleasure and just succumb to these behind-the-glittery-curtain sagas when there's as much heart and feeling as writer-director Prince-Bythewood (*Love & Basketball*) injects into her material. But the big surprise here is Mbatha-Raw, who turned heads this year in the period drama *Belle*. The emerging British actress proves she's equally captivating in the very contemporary drag of a booty-shaking Beyonce-Rihanna clone, selling sex with a pumped-up R&B beat.

The film opens in London in 1998, where white Brixton single mum Macy Jean (Driver) guides her shy black 10-year-old daughter, Noni (India Jean-Jacques), through a talent contest. Noni comes in second with an unaccompanied performance of Nina Simone's plaintive "Blackbird," but that represents failure for hungry Macy. She tells the compliant kid to toss the trophy, hissing, "You wanna be a runner-up? Or you wanna be a winner?"

Prince-Bythewood amusingly navigates a leap forward in time by cutting to an aggressively sexual music video for "Masterpiece," one of three back-to-back hits that the adult Noni (Mbatha-Raw) has recorded with superstar white rapper Kid Culprit (Colson "MGK" Baker). The awkward, bespectacled girl with the tangled mop of hair has been transformed into a strutting gazelle, with a toned body, flowing weave and micro wardrobe. The song wins a Billboard Award, but when Noni returns to her Beverly Hills hotel, she attempts a suicide dive off her 12th floor balcony and is rescued by Kaz (Parker), an LAPD hunk on celebrity-babysitting duty.

Macy, now running a tight ship as Noni's manager, goes into instant spin mode. At a news conference, the incident is brushed off as the accidental result of too many celebratory drinks, and Kaz is hailed as a hero. But despite receiving a fat check as payment for sticking to the story, the cop is too sensitive not to feel Noni's pain. And she likes that he sees beyond the fame to the soulful girl inside.

There's a somewhat schematic neatness to Noni and Kaz both being driven by single parents who want success for their children at least partly for their own vicarious glory. In Kaz's case, it's his father, Police Captain Nicol (Danny Glover), who has helped him strategize a career path in which law enforcement is the stepping stone between political science and actual politics, starting with Los Angeles city council and then moving up to bigger things.

With the label threatening to drop Noni's debut album due to negative social media attention, it's imperative that she kick ass — or, at the very least, show some — in a live performance at the BET Awards. But Kaz's lesson of self-worth (he reads Obama books and wears Muhammad Ali T-shirts) prompts her to rebel, which doesn't sit well with the skeevy Kid Culprit, with Macy or with the label.

Pretty much every development here is preprogrammed from countless films about the meteoric rise to stardom, the lack of oxygen up there and the good-lovin' angel who steps in to light the way back down to Earth. But Prince-Bythewood's script brings surprising integrity to that well-trodden arc, and while Kaz is a major force in Noni's outcome, it's her own backbone and intelligence that get her through.

Economy is not exactly a strong point here, and at just under two hours, the film at times lingers where it should glide, pausing for at least a couple too many music montages. But these are appealing characters to spend time with, and both Mbatha-Raw and Parker bring warmth, charisma and emotional openness to their roles that keep you rooting for them to reconcile their conflicted paths. Even Driver's character has her brittle edges softened enough to stop her from being a monster.

The film looks, and more important, sounds sharp. Cool grooves pepper the soundtrack, and the handful of songs for Noni, written by Terius "The-Dream" Nash and Richard C. Baker, mimic the vernacular of today's overproduced R&B convincingly enough to make it credible that everyone wants a piece of her.

Sales *Relativity International* // **Cast** *Gugu Mbatha-Raw, Nate Parker, Minnie Driver, Colson "MGK" Baker, Danny Glover*
Director *Gina Prince-Bythewood// 116 minutes*

The Barber

This low-budget serial-killer thriller benefits from narrative and stylistic efficiency without sacrificing production quality

BY JUSTIN LOWE

Coy is out to solve a case his father could not.

CALIFORNIA'S CHAPMAN University ventures into film production with *The Barber*, a twisty thriller produced by Chapman Filmed Entertainment, a spinoff of the school's Dodge College of Film & Media Arts, which places Dodge alumni, students and industry professionals in creative and support positions to produce micro-budgeted independent films. Director Basel Owies and producer Travis Knox are Dodge graduates, and if this notable feature is any indication of what to expect from the new initiative, Chapman has hit on a winning formula.

A determined focus on tight plotting and engaging character development not only helps keep the budget in check but also necessitates an economy of style that heightens the impact of the film's numerous plot twists, although the narrative begins conventionally — a suspected serial killer terrorizes the Chicago area in the late 1990s with 17 murders of young women.

Police detective Thomas McCormack (Thomas Calabro) gets a break in his investigation with the arrest of suspect Francis Visser (Scott Glenn), but without sufficient evidence to hold him, Visser gets released, prompting McCormack to kill himself in despair over his inability to solve the case.

Twenty years later, McCormack's son John (Chris Coy) sets out to bring the case to resolution. The town's police chief (Stephen Tobolowsky) also gets involved.

Screenwriter Max Enscoe's spoiler-susceptible script turns on a clever premise that constantly keeps the plot in flux, shifting the balance of power between Visser and McCormack but never giving either the upper hand until the film's conclusion. Although some of the finer details could have been more clearly articulated, the story arc presents a fundamental moral conflict, with motivations and alliances constantly in question.

The import of this underlying uncertainty relies on Glenn's nuanced performance, which is as notable for its command of tone as for its remarkable physicality. Coy's wild-eyed delivery, suggesting his character's constantly shifting mental state, is all the more satisfying for its misdirection, revealed in the film's final scenes.

With his feature debut, Owies demonstrates that a degree of restraint pays off admirably, particularly with his emphasis on conventional framing and pacing (along with DP Allen Liu's often flat, expressionless lighting), which advantageously suppresses typical genre expectations until nearly all the film's twists have played out.

Sales *The Little Film Co.*
Cast *Scott Glenn, Chris Coy, Stephen Tobolowsky*
Director *Basel Owies*
90 minutes

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VMI WORLDWIDE

Stetter and Confurius hear wedding bells.

Beloved Sisters

Dominik Graf's handsome, if slightly staid, period romance tells the story of two sisters who fall in love with German writer Friedrich Schiller BY BOYD VAN HOEIJ

THE FAMOUS GERMAN POET, WRITER AND dramatist Friedrich Schiller is given a tumultuous private life to rival any of his own Romantic writings in *Beloved Sisters (Die geliebten Schwestern)*, from veteran filmmaker Dominik Graf.

The historical record confirms that Schiller married Charlotte von Lengefeld and they had four children, but in Graf's reimagining of events, the writer was really caught between Charlotte and her older sister, Caroline von Lengefeld, an unhappily married woman who wowed 18th century German audiences with an initially anonymously published serial novel. The resulting menage a trois is the driving force behind this handsomely produced if occasionally old-fashioned period drama, which plays like a soap opera with characters who happen to have better manners and finery.

The marriage of the pragmatic Caroline (*Four Minutes* star Hannah Herzsprung) to the "evil elephant" Von Beulwitz (Andreas Pietschmann) has saved the von Lengefelds, petty nobles from Thuringia based in provincial Rudolstadt, from financial ruin after the early death of their paterfamilias. Caroline's younger sister, Charlotte (Henriette Confurius), still needs to find a husband and is sent to stay with her godmother, Frau von Stein (Maja Maranow), a Lady of the Court in worldly Weimar and the mistress of Goethe, who's gone on his Italian journey.

But instead of picking a future husband from a social circle above her own, Charlotte is charmed by Friedrich Schiller (Florian Stetter, from *Sophie Scholl*), a writer she meets when he asks her for directions. He's had some success with his play *The Robbers* but is neither rich nor of noble birth — though he's certainly valiant, as demonstrated by his decision to jump into the river to save a drowning child even though he can't swim.

The sisters insist he get rid of his wet clothes and then warm him together in the sun. It's here that Graf's modus operandi comes into full view, as most contemporary films would have turned this scene, featuring a handsome and naked young man and the two lovely sisters with whom he's about to embark on a lifelong menage a trois, into a frolicsome *dejeuner sur l'herbe*. Graf, though, respects the mores of the time and instead zooms in — quite literally, in an affected gesture that serves little purpose other than making the film feel old-fashioned — on the hands of the two sisters, tightly clenched in unity.

Their secret pact to loving the same man equally is an unusual arrangement that's further complicated not by Schiller, who's delighted and not in the least flabbergasted, but by the fact that Caroline is married and her family's economic well-being is tied to her union. Always the pragmatist, she suggests Charlotte marry Schiller instead, so they can keep him close. Caroline does finally sleep with him one night, a discreetly filmed coupling that nonetheless oozes orgasmic bliss since the tension has been building for an hour before any kind of physical contact beyond a handshake actually occurs.

The film's midsection, which takes place after the French Revolution has left France, and especially its aristocracy, in tatters, is set in the town of Jena, where Schiller finds a position as a university lecturer. The trio's arrangement initially seems to suit all parties, but when Charlotte confesses she's never slept with her husband because she believes her sister deserves this privilege for having married a creep to save the family, Caroline packs her bags and leaves, saying their "stupid and cruel pact" is null and void. The women only start frequenting each other again several years later when Schiller and Charlotte have had a son and Caroline is about to divorce.

Though Schiller was a writer who tackled love, most notably in his *Romeo and Juliet*-like play *Intrigue and Love*, Graf, who also wrote the screenplay, keeps Schiller's oeuvre almost entirely off-screen, simply presenting him as a sensitive human being who happens to be a writer. This focus on emotions turns the film into a relatively straightforward historical melodrama and means no knowledge of Schiller, Sturm und Drang or Weimar Classicism is required.

However, this doesn't mean characters don't write; letters, rather than books and plays, are being written constantly in the film, and the director shows the protagonists reciting from their correspondence directly to the camera at regular intervals — another stylistically mannered touch that nevertheless gives audiences direct access to the characters' emotions.

It is Caroline who finally emerges as the most fully rounded of the characters, as her dilemmas and sacrifices are the greatest and she has a talent for writing to rival Schiller's own (his historically documented distaste for female writers is thankfully not glossed over here). Herzsprung makes Caroline a fiery character who has to face her own internal battles about what she wants and what she knows is right. When Caroline's desire to write comes to the fore, Charlotte, played with conflicted vitality by Confurius, recedes into the background, a mother content to dote on her children, which is selling the character's complex nature short and which makes the finale feel uneven.

As the man between the two, Stetter cuts a dashing figure but never conveys the intellect needed to make Schiller believable as a thinker — though he's an improvement on Matthias Schweighoefer, who played the famous author as a young man in a 2005 TV film also produced by Uschi Reich.

Location work, production and costume design are all first-rate, while the score by Sven Rossenbach and Florian Van Volxem gets the job done.

Sales *Global Screen*
Cast *Hannah Herzsprung, Florian Stetter, Henriette Confurius, Claudia Messner*
Writer-director *Dominik Graf*
170 minutes

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The Duke of Burgundy

Smart, gorgeous to look at and full of erotically charged surprises, this *sui generis* feature is a constant delight

BY LESLIE FELPERIN

Knudsen (left) and D'Anna play adult games.

VISUALLY RAVISHING, emotionally wise and kinky as a coiled rope, writer-director Peter Strickland's third feature, *The Duke of Burgundy*, is a delight. Set in a timeless European otherworld where all the characters are women dressed in retro duds and have an interest in entomology, it features Sidse Babett Knudsen and Chiara D'Anna as lovers who like to play mistress and servant. The film's adult content and surrealism will keep it closed up in arthouse boxes theatrically, but it's bound to develop a passionate cult following among cineastes and other specialist audiences.

Opening with a title sequence that's all dreamy music, freeze frames and lurid washes of color, the action kicks in as seemingly shy, gamine Evelyn (D'Anna) arrives at the home of Cynthia (Kundsen), who appears at first to be her stern, exacting employer. Cynthia instructs Evelyn to clean the house and then wash her panties. When one slip of silk is discovered neglected, Cynthia punishes Evelyn behind the closed bathroom door in a way that explains why Cynthia drinks so many glasses of water.

But everything is not all it seems. The cleaning, the punishments and the dialogue are all part of an elaborate sex game, one almost entirely dictated by Evelyn. Like a demanding director, she sometimes criticizes Cynthia for lacking conviction in her line readings and supervises the choice of every prop.

Shot in Hungary in a series of ivy-covered mansions and crumbling villas, the film unfolds in a universe where all the characters, all of them women, have some connection to a local entomological institute where they attend one another's scientific lectures.

Although there are plenty of shots of arthropods pinned dead in glass cases, often in extreme close-up and later exploded via visual effects into a phantasmagoric dream sequence, Strickland doesn't seem to be making any kind of cheesy symbol out of them — if he is, it's in homage to the crude visual metaphors one finds in the film's inspirations, especially the work of Jess Franco.

But Strickland's game here is about more than mere pastiche. He takes the mood and tonalities of schlock '70s cinema and repurposes them for something that feels very modern and very personal. Thanks to the richly layered performances from the two leads, especially Knudsen, an intricate architecture of emotional co-dependence reveals itself, though there is plenty of humor as well.

If the film has one fault, it's that Strickland's script and Matyas Fekete's editing create too many endings, and the last run of scenes go on a trifle too long. Otherwise, Nic Knowland's digital cinematography creates a woozy, textured environment for the action, brimming with mirror shots and games of focus that reflect the fun-house world of the action.

Sales *Protagonist Pictures*
Cast *Sidse Babett Knudsen, Chiara D'Anna*
Director *Peter Strickland*
104 minutes

On Any Sunday: The Next Chapter

Dana Brown's documentary about motorcycle racing is a serviceable sequel to his father Bruce's 1971 classic BY FRANK SCHECK

"THERE'S AN EVER-CHANGING LINE between the insane and the sublime in terms of man's relationship with this machine," says one commentator in *On Any Sunday: The Next Chapter*. We see that line get crossed with abandon in Dana Brown's long belated sequel to his father Bruce's 1971 classic documentary about motorcycle racing.

While unlikely to appeal to the unconverted, the film should thrill motorcycle aficionados and armchair athletes for whom the closest thing to riding is wearing a Harley-Davidson jacket.

Like his father before him, Brown narrates the proceedings, though he hasn't quite mastered his old man's amusingly jocular style. We're told that motorcycle daredevils have been around since the machine's invention in the mid-19th century — who knew? — and a suitable nod is delivered to its most famous icon, Evel Knievel. We're then introduced to his modern-day counterpart, Aussie racer Robbie Maddison, whose feats include jumping the length of a football field and flying off the top of the Arc de Triomphe.

Skipping merrily among its various topics, the film profiles such figures as 21-year-old Grand Prix motorcycle racer Marc Marquez, one of only four riders to claim world championship titles in three disciplines; Carlin Dunne, a winner of the Pike's Peak International Hill Climb whose latest attempt was accomplished with an electric bike fueled by solar energy; Travis Pastrana, a star of the adrenaline-charged Nitro Circus "action sports collective"; and James Stewart, one of the few black riders on the supercross and motocross circuits.

It's "no risk, no reward" for these motorcyclists.

Inspiration is provided in the form of Ashley Fiolek, an award-winning rider who's been deaf since birth; the partially paralyzed Doug Henry, who rides a specially adapted bike; and the "Riders for Health," who use motorcycles to deliver health care to remote areas in Africa.

Crisscrossing the world to spotlight such events as flat track racing in Illinois, speedway racing in Alberta and freestyle motocross in Park City, the film serves as both a virtual travelogue and a not-so-subtle advertisement for Red Bull, whose media arm is one of its presenters.

Although the film doesn't quite live up to its predecessor — Mickey Rourke and Bo Derek, among the celebrities featured, aren't exactly Steve McQueen — it does benefit immeasurably from the advances in cinematography made in the intervening decades. Gorgeously shot in crisp 4K, often with the sort of tiny cameras that provide arresting POV perspectives, it's a visually stunning experience.

Sales *Red Bull Media House*
Director *Dana Brown*
95 min.

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Comedy/Drama

In a quaint Malay village, the villagers' attempt at physically relocating a wooden house may have enraged the devil.

Police Evo

In-Production

Action/Comedy

Big city cop is reluctantly paired with a small town cop in a mission to take down a drug lord with hilarious results in this action-packed flick.

The Sky of Love

In-Production

Drama/Romance

Wealthy city boy meets beautiful village girl but their relationship is tested to the limits.

Hysteria 2

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Horror

A mother's search for her kidnapped daughter brings her to an abandoned house with chilling results.

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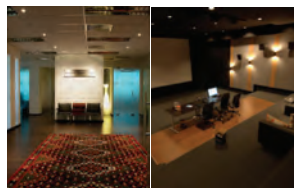

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Bennett has babies on the brain.

Preggoland

A fake baby opens all kinds of doors in this wan comedy about the peer pressure to procreate BY JOHN DEFORE

A LATE-MATURING WOMAN FINDS SHE GETS A LOT MORE RESPECT when people think she's pregnant in *Preggoland*, Jacob Tierney's follow-up to the 2009 Jay Baruchel comedy *The Trotsky*. Constructed exactly like a middlebrow studio comedy but lacking the verve that might make it play like one, it's the kind of film that could generate more laughs in a packed multiplex room than at any festival.

Screenwriter Sonja Bennett plays Ruth, who enters the film as a single outcast at her friend's baby shower: Hungover but quickly regaining her buzz via a flask, she crosses the line when she physically wounds one of these beaming mothers' angels; soon, Ruth's three best friends let her know they'd rather not hang out with her anymore.

After buying an expensive stroller for the woman whose party she ruined, Ruth starts getting mistaken for an expectant mother. People get up for her on the bus, and smiles flash all around her. Danny (Paul Campbell), the picky new manager at the supermarket where she works, is about to fire her, but the rumor gets around to him just in time to save her job. And then her grandkid-hungry dad (James Caan) finds out, and hearing it's all a lie just might kill him.

Bennett comes up with many ways for Ruth to dig herself in deeper, each scene calling out for a snappier performance or sharper timing. The characterizations of her former friends, who of course embrace her once they think she's joining the club, are as unconvincing as Ruth's new partnership with stockboy Pedro (Danny Trejo), who gets his wife to make her a prosthetic belly in return for Ruth's help at the store.

Once people are paying attention to her, Ruth discovers a surprising new interest in her job; if this is one more plot point too easily achieved, it's easier to accept the effect her competence has on Danny, a secretly lonely guy who has always wanted a family.

"I want out," a guilty-feeling Ruth tells Pedro as she begins to reciprocate Danny's affection and starts to fear disappointing him. As unpleasant as it is to point out, evidently neither of them has heard of a miscarriage: Even after an accident at the store gives her the perfect excuse to play that card, the new Smart Ruth is still dumb about the one easy lie that would end all the hard ones.

Sales *Lightning Entertainment* // **Cast** *Sonja Bennett, Danny Trejo, Laura Harris, James Caan, Paul Campbell*
Director *Jacob Tierney* // *109 minutes*

The Last 5 Years

Anna Kendrick and Jeremy Jordan fall in and out of love in Richard LaGravenese's limp screen version of the stage musical

BY DAVID ROONEY

COMPOSER-LYRICIST JASON Robert Brown's *The Last 5 Years* is an intimate chamber piece that recaps the romance, marriage and separation of a struggling actress and a successful novelist. The 2002 musical's structural trick is that it charts her experience in reverse, starting at the shattered conclusion, and his in standard, forward chronology, beginning with love's transporting bloom. Onstage, they share just one full duet when their accounts intersect mid-show. There must have been some spark of inspiration that made director Richard LaGravenese believe this hermetic construct might benefit from the larger breathing space of screen treatment. But it doesn't.

Perhaps, along with star Anna Kendrick's rising popularity, the original material's extensive fan base will help the movie find an audience.

Even in this fleshed-out form, *The Last 5 Years* is still a two-hander, and Kendrick and Jeremy Jordan make a charming pair. Their musical backgrounds are evident in the confidence and depth of feeling they bring to the songs, but also in the ease with which they shift between rom-com breeziness and full-blown passion. LaGravenese has added minimal dialogue, so while this is not a sung-through musical to the extent of, say, *Les Miserables*, song is its dominant means of expression.

The problem is that the romance as depicted is just not interesting enough to sustain realistic treatment. The two characters lack dimension, and their stereotypical situations seem entirely generic. This has always been the case in a piece admired more for the lush melodies and naked emotions of Brown's theater-pop score than for its storytelling. The evolution of the relationship is the show's entire universe, and putting that relationship against a real-world backdrop exposes the narrative as emaciated and mundane.

Kendrick plays Cathy, the shiksa goddess who wins the heart of

The careers of Jordan and Kendrick go in different directions.

Jordan's nice Jewish boy Jamie, an aspiring writer when they meet. As LaGravenese zigzags back over their five years together, we watch Cathy's dreams of becoming an actress fizzle in one deflating audition after another. Jamie, by contrast, drops out of Columbia and becomes a literary sensation when Random House publishes his debut novel to instant acclaim.

In one of Brown's more perceptive songs, "If I Didn't Believe in You," Jamie refuses to feel bad about getting his break while insisting that doesn't mean he's stopped wanting the same for Cathy. But the imbalance eats away at their marriage.

The curious hole in Brown's musical and LaGravenese's film of it is that we witness very little of the breakup. The relationship's erosion is examined in their individual heads, which makes for pretty songs but inert drama.

It also doesn't help that the movie looks messy, with flat interior lighting and so many awkward confessional close-ups that it starts to seem like a selfie video.

Jordan, best known for his role on NBC's theater-biz soap *Smash*, makes Jamie a personable guy, but his character is saddled with a deadly comic number, "The Schmuel Song," at an inopportune moment and never fully recovers. Kendrick has the more sensitively drawn role and the movie's most infectious moments of humor.

Sales *The Exchange*
Cast *Anna Kendrick, Jeremy Jordan*
Director *Richard LaGravenese*
94 minutes

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Stations of the Cross

Newcomer Lea van Acken impresses in German director Dietrich Brueggemann's tale of a teenage girl suffocated by a strict religious upbringing BY BOYD VAN HOEIJ

A GERMAN TEENAGE GIRL struggles with questions of life, death and faith in *Stations of the Cross (Kreuzweg)*, director Dietrich Brueggemann's remarkable and formally rigorous arthouse item that's closely modeled on the Via Crucis.

Divided into 14 chapters that carry the names of the stations (Jesus is Condemned to Death, Jesus Carries His Cross ...), the film chronicles the tough spot that 14-year-old protagonist Maria — what's in a name? — finds herself in as she prepares for her confirmation and tries to live up to the impossible expectations set by her priest and her family, who belong to the extremely strict (fictitious) Society of St. Paul congregation.

Though leavened with occasional moments of acerbic humor, the film is an impressive but rather grim cinematic experience that will please art house purists and festival junkies but has a snowball's chance in hell of a wider commercial breakout.

Maria (Lea van Acken) is a spindly teenage girl, withdrawn and contemplative even in the film's opening scene, where she's one of a small group of teenagers attending a pre-confirmation class given by Father Weber (Florian Stetter). Maria tries to take in everything she's told and, after class, remains behind to ask why a small child, still free of sin, can become gravely ill and if the concept of sacrifice is something that can be extended to a whole life. They seem innocent enough questions, but taken together with the title of the chapter, "Jesus Is Condemned to Death," there's a sense of ominous dread that pervades even this first scene, a 15-minute conversation that, like all other scenes, consists of a single take.

As the film moves from station to station, it becomes increasingly clear that the strict regulations are a heavy burden for Maria, who longs to be close to God but who cannot deny she has desires of her own. Brueggemann, who wrote the screenplay with his sister, Anna, beautifully suggests how religion can offer comfort in hard times but at the same time can suffocate personal growth, which is especially problematic for a teenager. The film never outright condemns religion but instead coolly observes the devastating results of simply following the rules imposed by religion to the letter.

Van Acken is a girl torn between duty and desire.

This detached quality is further reinforced by filming each chapter in a single take, something Brueggemann already experimented with in his debut film, *Neun Szenen*, and by not moving the camera except at just a handful of key moments.

Newcomer van Acken is a phenomenal find, and Franziska Weisz offers able support as Maria's mother, who realizes her daughter is slipping away from her and, in the one-but-last chapter, puts her own spin on what has happened so that it all makes sense.

Cast *Lea van Acken, Franziska Weisz, Florian Stetter*
Director *Dietrich Brueggemann*
105 minutes

10,000 KM

The distinctions between human connections and Internet connections are the focus of this perceptive two-hander BY JONATHAN HOLLAND

A WELL-CRAFTED, TIGHTLY CONTROLLED and emotionally probing X-ray of one couple's attempts to use technology to keep their relationship alive across a continent and an ocean, Carlos Marques-Marcet's *10,000 Km* is a solid example of form and content working together.

The opening shot seems like an opportunity for D.P. Dagmar Weaver-Madsen to show us what she can do before she hands over to Skype. It's a superbly choreographed and intimate 23-minute sequence, shot inside a Barcelona apartment in which a couple — photographer Alex (Natalia Tena in a soul-bearing performance) and student Sergi (David Verdaguer) make slow, intense love before she reveals that she's been offered a yearlong residency in L.A. It's a similar prospect faced by many Spaniards in today's harsh economic climate: do I stay, and put my relationships before my professional future, or do I go?

David is studying for state exams, which Spanish viewers will realize makes him the kind of person who's opted for an easy, stable life rather than for adventure, but Alex is restless, seeing no future for herself in Spain. She leaves, and for a while, things are just fine as she uses a range of software — mainly Skype — to show David her new life in Silver Lake and to keep from feeling lonely.

The movie is a sharp critique of the powers and limitations of technology. Designed to bring people closer — it's possible that without Skype, Alex would either not have left David at all or forgotten about him sooner — technology is forensically revealed as a phenomenon that can indeed bring people together at the informational level, but can be no substitute for their physical presence.

Tena and Verdaguer share a moment before she's off to L.A.

Indeed, the technology, rather than bringing the lovers closer, drives them apart, with Alex for the first time able to observe her boyfriend from a distance and to gauge what he's like. David is very good looking but not particularly appealing, and at one point there's a touch of the psychopath about him.

The film's use of multiple screens is telling and pleasingly ambiguous. When, for example, David's Skyped face is plastered over with images of Alex's photos because she's looking at them as she chats to him, there's already a sense that the writing is on the wall. And as David leafs morosely through an old photograph album, there is the sense that he's been left behind not only by his cutting-edge, image-driven photographer partner, but by a new world of tech which has outstripped him.

Cast *Natalia Tena, David Verdaguer*
Director *Carlos Marques-Marcet*
98 minutes

PROMOTION

the FOREIGN LANGUAGE Race

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The Hollywood Reporter

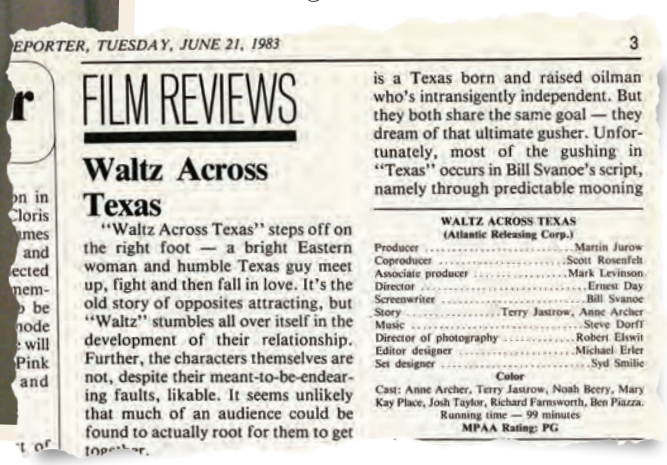
"Once you're not the sexual, pert female onscreen, you have to evolve into character roles," says Archer, pictured with Jastrow at an AFM event in West Hollywood in March 1983.

Anne Archer Brought *Texas* to AFM in 1983

THREE DECADES AGO, actress Anne Archer and her husband, Terry Jastrow, formerly an Emmy-winning sports producer, brought their first joint creative venture, *Waltz Across Texas*, to the American Film Market. Critics, including *THR*'s own, thought the film — an opposites-attract love story between an ambitious Texas oilman (Jastrow) and an East Coast geologist (Archer) — was quite predictable. But the couple received high praise for their entrepreneurial efforts behind the scenes.

Spending months in Jastrow's native Texas, the pair, who had wed in 1979, threw themselves headlong into producing the independent feature, securing the financing and writing and starring in the movie itself. "We were very recently married, we were very adventurous then, and everything seemed possible," Archer, now 67, recalls. "We just decided to go for it."

Now, 30 years after *Texas*, Archer, who was nominated for a supporting actress Oscar for 1987's *Fatal Attraction* and co-starred alongside Harrison Ford in 1992's *Patriot Games*, once again is collaborating with her husband, now 66, to produce *The Squeeze*, a golf-and-gambling caper that Jastrow wrote and directed. Thanks to their work on the first film, the duo, who has a son together (Archer has another son, Tommy Davis, from a previous marriage, who was for many years the head of the Church of Scientology's L.A. Celebrity Centre), was able to get full funding from the same investors in slightly more than a week. "We work really well together," says Archer. "We're a good team." — PAIGE PHELAN



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FILM REVIEWS

Waltz Across Texas

"Waltz Across Texas" steps off on the right foot — a bright Eastern woman and humble Texas guy meet up, fight and then fall in love. It's the old story of opposites attracting, but "Waltz" stumbles all over itself in the development of their relationship. Further, the characters themselves are not, despite their meant-to-be-endearing faults, likable. It seems unlikely that much of an audience could be found to actually root for them to get

is a Texas born and raised oilman who's intransigently independent. But they both share the same goal — they dream of that ultimate gusher. Unfortunately, most of the gushing in "Texas" occurs in Bill Svanoe's script, namely through predictable mooning

WALTZ ACROSS TEXAS
(Atlantic Releasing Corp.)

Producer ..... Marrin Jurow
Coproducer ..... Scott Rosenfelt
Associate producer ..... Mark Levinson
Director ..... Ernest Day
Screenwriter ..... Bill Svanoe
Story ..... Terry Jastrow, Anne Archer
Music ..... Steve Dorff
Director of photography ..... Robert Elswit
Editor designer ..... Michael Erler
Set designer ..... Syd Smilie

Color

Cast: Anne Archer, Terry Jastrow, Noah Beery, Mary Kay Place, Josh Taylor, Richard Farnsworth, Ben Piazza.
Running time — 99 minutes
MPAA Rating: PG

RON GALELLA/WIREIMAGE/GETTY IMAGES

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Our Team is located at Loews Hotel Suite #658